

Message Text

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STADIS, FOR ATHERTON (USDEL NO. 4)////////////////

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1 AND 2

TAGS: PEPR, XF, IS, JO, EG

SUBJECT: STRATEGY PAPER FOR BEGIN VISIT

1. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES CURRENT VERSION, AS SENT TO SECRETARY, OF MEMO TO PRESIDENT ON OUR OBJECTIVES FOR THE BEGIN VISIT. PRINCIPAL CHANGE FROM ORIGINAL VERSION YOU TOOK WITH YOU HAS BEEN A SHIFT IN EMPHASIS TO THE 242 AND WEST BANK/GAZA/PALESTINIAN ISSUES AND THE NEED TO MODIFY THE BEGIN PLAN; AND DOWNPLAYING THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS AS A PRIORITY ITEM FOR DISCUSSION. PAPER RECOMMENDS PRESSING FOR AN UNEQUIVOCAL ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE OF THE APPLICABILITY OF 242 TO THE WEST BANK/GAZA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 047664

2. PREAMBLE:

-- BEGIN'S VISIT WILL BE OF DECISIVE IMPORTANCE TO THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. TIME IS PASSING AND THE ISRAELIS HAVE NOT MOVED SIGNIFICANTLY TOWARDS DECISIONS ON THE WEST BANK/GAZA AND PALESTINIAN ISSUES NEEDED FOR FURTHER

PROGRESS.

-- OUR PURPOSE WILL BE TO CONVINCE HIM THAT ISRAEL MUST NOW CONSIDER SERIOUSLY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST BANK/GAZA AND THE FUTURE OF THE PALESTINIANS OR RISK LOSING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE WITH EGYPT. IT WILL PROBABLY TAKE FURTHER TIME AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION BEFORE ISRAEL TAKES A DECISION, AND BEGIN'S VISIT WILL BE A STAGE IN THIS PROCESS.

3. DESCRIPTIONS OF THE RESPECTIVE EGYPTIAN, ISRAELI, JORDANIAN POSITIONS AND HOW THEY INTER-RELATE:

-- THIS SECTION IS UPDATE OF ORIGINAL VERSION.

4. THE DECISION BEFORE US: WE WILL NEED AT SOME POINT SOON TO DECIDE WHETHER TO MAKE AS OUR GOALS IN THIS VISIT THE ALTERATION OF THE BEGIN PLAN, ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE THAT 242 ENTAILS WITHDRAWAL FROM WB/G, AND ACCEPTANCE OF ASWAN LANGUAGE IN A DECLARATION. A FURTHER LOOK WILL BE REQUIRED ON THE EVE OF THE VISIT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ATHERTON'S TALKS. THIS SECTION INCORPORATES MOST OF PP. 5-6 OF ORIGINAL MEMO.

5. STRATEGY FOR BEGIN VISIT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 047664

-- BEGIN HAS PROFESSED REPEATED MISUNDERSTANDINGS OF THE U.S. POSITION ON KEY ISSUES (E.G., THE ILLEGALITY OF SETTLEMENTS AND THE REQUIREMENT UNDER 242 FOR WITHDRAWAL ON ALL FRONTS). "IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE TRY AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, BEFORE AND DURING THIS VISIT, TO MAKE BEGIN UNDERSTAND WHAT THE U.S. POSITION IS AND CLARIFY THE ISRAELI POSITION."

-- BEGIN TOOK THE POSITION WITH ATHERTON THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT ACCEPT WITHDRAWAL ON ALL FRONTS AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS UNDER 242, AND ARGUED THAT EACH SIDE COULD HOLD TO ITS OWN INTERPRETATION OF 242. "SECRETARY IS INSTRUCTING ATHERTON TO MAKE CLEAR THAT STICKING TO THIS POSITION COULD MAKE NEGOTIATIONS IMPOSSIBLE."

-- WE PREDICT THAT BEGIN WILL COME WITH HIS OWN AGENDA, WILL ARGUE THAT EACH SIDE CAN HAVE ITS OWN INTERPRETATION OF 242 AND THAT ISRAELIS WILL STICK TO THEIRS, MAY TRY TO CENTER THE DISCUSSION ON PROCEDURAL AND OTHER ISSUES HE HAS BEEN RECENTLY DISCUSSING (I.E., THE ASYMMETRY IN THE TWO COMMITTEES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGENDA ITEM C, SEMANTIC SOLUTIONS IN THE DECLARATION). HE MAY WELL RAISE THE THREAT

OF WITHDRAWING HIS SINAI PROPOSAL.

-- BEGIN'S POSITION PROBABLY COMMANDS SUPPORT OF AN ISRAELI MAJORITY, BUT ISRAELI POLITICS INCREASINGLY REFLECTS A MOOD OF APPRAISAL-- DEFENSIVE AND AWARE THAT THE U.S. IS URGING ISRAEL TO TAKE A DIFFERENT POSITION. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, DISCUSSING THE BEGIN PLAN MAY BE THE

BEST MEANS OF BRINGING THE WITHDRAWAL ISSUE TO A HEAD.

-- THERE ARE TWO IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES IN THE VISIT. FIRST IS TO CONVINCE BEGIN THAT THE U.S. POSITION IS EXACTLY WHAT IT IS, I.E., SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE BASED ON 242, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR WITHDRAWAL ON THE WEST BANK
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 047664

WHEN SECURITY MEASURES ARE AGREED; ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ARE ILLEGAL AND THEIR FUTURE MUST BE NEGOTIATED; THERE MUST BE A RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, INCLUDING PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN DETERMINING THEIR FUTURE.

-- THE SECOND OBJECTIVE IS TO BRING BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND, THROUGH DISCUSSION OF HIS PLAN, WHAT BASIC DECISIONS HE MUST MAKE IF THE PEACE PROCESS IS TO GO FORWARD. WE WOULD PROPOSE MODIFYING THE BEGIN PLAN ALONG THE LINES DISCUSSED WITH SADAT, REQUIRING (A) ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE, SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION OF CONDITIONS MEETING ISRAELI SECURITY CONCERNS, OF WEST BANK/GAZA WITHDRAWALS; (B) ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCEPTABLE INTERIM REGIME, PROVIDING LIMITED SELF-RULE, AND (C) PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS AMONG PARTIES FOR A FINAL SOLUTION, WITH BORDER CHANGES, DEMILITARIZATION, LIMITATIONS ON SELF-DETERMINATION.

-- WHEN GIVING BEGIN OUR VIEW THAT ISRAEL'S UNEQUIVOCAL ACCEPTANCE OF 242, INCLUDING WITHDRAWAL FROM WEST BANK/GAZA, IS THE KEY TO PROGRESS, WE WOULD STRESS THAT WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE CONDITIONED ON MEETING HIS VITAL INTERESTS: NO COMMITMENT TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE; NO HOSTILE MILITARY FORCE IN THE TERRITORIES; NEGOTIATION OF BORDER MODIFICATIONS. ISRAEL WOULD NOT BE COMMITTED TO WITHDRAW UNTIL AND UNLESS THESE CONDITIONS ARE SATISFIED.

-- ISRAEL FOR ITS PART SHOULD SUSPEND FURTHER SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY WHILE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED; NEGOTIATE A DECLARATION BASED ON OUR ASWAN LANGUAGE; AND BEGIN DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPT ON A FRAMEWORK FOR WEST BANK/GAZA ARRANGEMENTS SUFFICIENT TO BRING HUSSEIN INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

-- IN RETURN, WE WOULD BE PREPARED: (A) TO PERSUADE SADAT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 047664

TO BEGIN NEGOTIATING ON ITEM C IN THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE;
(B) URGE HUSSEIN TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS AT AN EARLY
POINT; (C) ASK SAUDI SUPPORT; AND (D) WORK FOR AGREEMENT
ON AN INTERIM REGIME WHICH RETAINS AN IDF PRESENCE AND
GIVES ISRAEL THE CAPACITY TO PREVENT A FINAL SETTLEMENT
INIMICAL TO ITS VITAL INTERESTS.

-- FINALLY, WE WOULD EXPRESS OUR AWARENESS AND CONCERN
ABOUT BOTH THE DANGERS AND THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL DIFFI-
CULTIES SUCH A COURSE WOULD PRESENT BEGIN. WE WOULD INVITE
HIM TO DISCUSS WITH US FREELY WHAT KIND OF U.S. HELP
COULD MEET THIS PROBLEM: MUTUAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS;
U.S. PARTICIPATION IN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS ON THE GROUND,
SUCH AS IN THE SINAI MISSION; SYMPATHETIC U.S. CONSIDERA-
TION OF NEW SECURITY REQUIREMENTS; AND ANY OTHER SUP-
PORTIVE U.S. ROLE BEGIN MIGHT WANT.

-- WE DOUBT THAT BEGIN WILL BE READY TO GO AS FAR AS WE
WOULD WISH AT THIS TIME. OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE THEREFORE
IS TO NARROW THE DISCUSSION DOWN TO ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE
OF 242 AS REQUIRING WITHDRAWAL, MAKING CLEAR THAT IN THE
ABSENCE OF SUCH AN ISRAELI COMMITMENT IT WILL NOT BE
POSSIBLE TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE CONSE-
QUENT PROBLEMS. WHILE SHOWING UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY
FOR THE MAGNITUDE OF HIS PROBLEM, WE WANT TO MAKE EQUALLY
CLEAR THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE NOW REACHED THE STAGE
WHERE PROGRESS DEPENDS ON ISRAELI DECISION ON WITHDRAWAL.
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